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## THE ITINERARY OF BENJAMIN OF TUDELA (*continued*).

### HEBREW TEXT.

ומשם יום וחצי לסורא<sup>1</sup> היא מתא מחסיה שהיו שם<sup>2</sup> ראשי  
גלויות וראשי ישיבות בתחלה ושם קבר<sup>3</sup> רבי' שרירא ורבי' האי  
בנו ז"ל ורבי' סעדיה אל פיומי ורב שמואל בן חפני הכהן וצפניה  
בן כושי בן גדליה הנביא<sup>4</sup> ונשיאי בית דוד<sup>5</sup> וראשי ישיבות שהיו שם  
בתחלה קודם חורבנה: ומשם שני ימים לשפית'ב<sup>6</sup> ושם הכנסת<sup>7</sup>  
שבנו ישראל מעפר ירושלם ומאבניה ובנו אותה וקראו<sup>8</sup> אותה שפית'ב  
אשר בנהרדעא<sup>9</sup>: ומשם יום וחצי לאלינבר<sup>10</sup> היא פום בדיתא אשר  
בנהרדעא<sup>12</sup>. ושם כמו שלשת אלפים יהודים<sup>13</sup> והיא על שפת פרת: ושם  
כנסת רב ושמואל ובית מדרשם<sup>14</sup> ולפניה קבריהם. ומשם<sup>15</sup> חמשה ימים  
לחילה: ומשם דרך מדבר ארץ שבא הנקראת ארץ | אל ימן<sup>16</sup> לצד ע'  
ארץ<sup>17</sup> שנער כנגד הצפון מהלך כ"א<sup>18</sup> יום במדברות<sup>19</sup> שם חונים היהודים  
הנקראים כיבר אנשי תימא<sup>20</sup>. ובתימא ראש הממשלה שלהם ושם ר'  
חנן הנשיא<sup>21</sup> מושל עליהם. והיא עיר גדולה ומהלך<sup>22</sup> ארצם י"ו<sup>23</sup> יום

<sup>1</sup> בנה. — RA A. — מחסיה, A, presently, לסורא; E, לסורא; O, לסורא; A. —  
<sup>2</sup> R. — קברו של R, Neub. קברי; E omits the word, A suggests its insertion. —  
<sup>3</sup> A. — רגנו שרירא ורב האי בנו ז"ל ורב O; רב שרירא ורבינו האי בנו ורבינו A. —  
<sup>4</sup> R here לשיפתיב; E here לשיפתיב, there לשיפתיב; RA נשיאי הגולה נשיאי O. —  
הנביא E omits. —  
<sup>5</sup> RA O. — סיפתיב; E here לשיפתיב, there לשיפתיב; RA נשיאי הגולה נשיאי O. —  
כנסת A. —  
<sup>6</sup> R omits. — לאלינבר E; אלינבר A. —  
<sup>7</sup> A. — בנהרדעא O. —  
<sup>8</sup> A. — ומאבניה וקראו O. —  
<sup>9</sup> A. —  
<sup>10</sup> A. —  
<sup>11</sup> A. —  
<sup>12</sup> A. —  
<sup>13</sup> A. —  
<sup>14</sup> A. —  
<sup>15</sup> A. —  
<sup>16</sup> A. —  
<sup>17</sup> A. —  
<sup>18</sup> A. —  
<sup>19</sup> A. —  
<sup>20</sup> A. —  
<sup>21</sup> A. —  
<sup>22</sup> A. —  
<sup>23</sup> A. —

בין הרים<sup>1</sup> הרי צפון. ויש להם ערים גדולות<sup>2</sup> ובצורות ואין עול גוים עליהם<sup>3</sup> והולכים לשלול שלל<sup>4</sup> ולבזז בו לארץ מרחק עם<sup>5</sup> בני ערב שכיניהם<sup>6</sup> בעלי בריתם. והם בני ערב חונים<sup>7</sup> באהליהם דרך מדבר ארצם ואין להם בתים והולכי לשלול שלל ולבזז בו<sup>8</sup> בארץ שנער ואל ימן וכל שכיניהם של יהודים<sup>9</sup> פוחדים מהם ובהם עובדי אדמה<sup>10</sup> ובעלי מקנה. וארצם רחבת ידים וביניהם<sup>11</sup> תלמידי חכמים ונותנין עישור<sup>12</sup> מכל אשר להם לתלמידי חכמים היושבים<sup>13</sup> בבית המדרש ולעניי ישראל ולפרושי הדור הם<sup>14</sup> אבילי ציון ואבילי ירושלם ואין<sup>15</sup> אוכלין בשר ואין שותין יין והם לובשים בגדים | שחורים והם יושבין במערות או בבתים גנוזים<sup>16</sup> ומתענים כל ימיהם<sup>17</sup> חוץ מן השבתו והימים<sup>18</sup> טובים. ומבקשים רחמים לפני הק' ב' ה'<sup>19</sup> על גלות ישראל שירחם עליהם בעבור שמו הגדול ועל<sup>20</sup> כל היהודים אנשי<sup>21</sup> תימא וטילמס<sup>22</sup> העיר הגדולה שיש בה כמו מאה אלף יהודים<sup>23</sup>. ושם שלמון<sup>24</sup> הנשיא אחי חנן הנשיא<sup>25</sup>. ובין שני האחים הארץ. והם מזרע<sup>26</sup> דוד כי כתב היחס<sup>27</sup> יש להם. ושגרים<sup>28</sup> שאלות הרבה<sup>29</sup> לראש הגולה קרובים שבבגדאד<sup>30</sup> ומתענים ארבעים יום בשנה על<sup>31</sup> היהודים היושבים בגלות<sup>32</sup>. ויש שם כמו ארבעים מדינות<sup>33</sup> ומאתים בין כפרים וכרכים<sup>34</sup>. וראש המדינות תנאי<sup>35</sup>. ושם בכל המדינות<sup>36</sup> כמו שלש מאות<sup>37</sup> אלף יהודים ועיר תנאי<sup>38</sup> בצורה מאד כי בתוכה זורעים וקוצרים והוא<sup>39</sup> מהלך ט"ו<sup>40</sup> מילין<sup>41</sup>. ושם ארמון הנשיא האחד הנקרא שלמון.

<sup>1</sup> והרים A. — <sup>2</sup> גדולות R omits. — <sup>3</sup> גוים A; עליהם R. — <sup>4</sup> ההרים A. — <sup>5</sup> ואין להם על גוים עליהם A; גוים R omits. — <sup>6</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>7</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>8</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>9</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>10</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>11</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>12</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>13</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>14</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>15</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>16</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>17</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>18</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>19</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>20</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>21</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>22</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>23</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>24</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>25</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>26</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>27</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>28</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>29</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>30</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>31</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>32</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>33</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>34</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>35</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>36</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>37</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>38</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>39</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>40</sup> גוים R omits. — <sup>41</sup> גוים R omits.



לפני קברו כנסת גדולה. ומצד<sup>1</sup> אחר עשו הישמעאלים בית הפילה<sup>2</sup> מרוב חבתם<sup>3</sup> ואוהבים את היהודים על ענין זה ובאים שם<sup>4</sup> הישמעאלים להתפלל: ומשם ארבעה ימים<sup>5</sup> לבזוזתאן<sup>6</sup> היא עילם המדינה<sup>7</sup> אינה מיושבת כולה כי היא חרבה מקצת' ובתוך חורבותיה<sup>8</sup> שושן הבירה. והיא<sup>9</sup> ארמון המלך אחשורוש והיה שם<sup>10</sup> בנין גדול והיה<sup>11</sup> מימים קדמונים. ובתוכה כמו<sup>12</sup> שבעת אלפים יהודים: ובה י"ד בתי כנסיות | ולפני הכנסת האחד<sup>13</sup> קברו של דניאל<sup>14</sup> ע"ה. ונהר חדקל חולק את המדינה והגשר ביניהם ובצד האחד שדרים שם היהודים קברו<sup>15</sup> של דניאל שם היו השוקים ובה הסחורה הגדולה ונתעשרו. ולצד<sup>16</sup> האחר של הגשר היו העניים<sup>17</sup> מפני שלא היו ביניהם שוקים ולא סוחרים אלא<sup>18</sup> גנות ופרדסים עד שלבשו קנאה ואמרו אין כל העושר והכבוד הזה אליהם<sup>19</sup> אלא על מול דניאל הנביא<sup>20</sup> שהוא קבור אצלם. ושאלו<sup>21</sup> לקבור דניאל בתוכם<sup>22</sup> ולא רצו ועשו מלחמות ביניהם ימים רבים<sup>23</sup> ואין יוצא ואין בא אליהם מפני המלחמה הגדולה שהיתה ביניהם עד אשר קצרה נפשם ונתחכמו<sup>24</sup> ועשו פשרה ביניהם: ליקח<sup>25</sup> ארון דניאל שנה אחת מצד אחד ושנה אחרת מצד אחר<sup>26</sup> ועשו כן ונתעשרו אלו ואילו משני הצדדין עד יום אחד מימים שבא לשם<sup>27</sup> סינגאר<sup>28</sup> שאה בן שאה המולך על מלכות<sup>29</sup> פרס על מ"ה<sup>30</sup> מלכים שהם תחת ידו והו' | סלטאן<sup>31</sup> אל פרס אל כביר בלשון ערב והוא המלך<sup>32</sup> משער נהר סמרה<sup>33</sup> עד עיר סמרבת<sup>34</sup>

<sup>1</sup> O מצד. — <sup>2</sup> A O add בו. — <sup>3</sup> A O add. — <sup>4</sup> A O add. — <sup>5</sup> A O add. — <sup>6</sup> A O add. — <sup>7</sup> A O add. — <sup>8</sup> A O add. — <sup>9</sup> A O add. — <sup>10</sup> A O add. — <sup>11</sup> A O add. — <sup>12</sup> A O add. — <sup>13</sup> A O add. — <sup>14</sup> A O add. — <sup>15</sup> A O add. — <sup>16</sup> A O add. — <sup>17</sup> A O add. — <sup>18</sup> A O add. — <sup>19</sup> A O add. — <sup>20</sup> A O add. — <sup>21</sup> A O add. — <sup>22</sup> A O add. — <sup>23</sup> A O add. — <sup>24</sup> A O add. — <sup>25</sup> A O add. — <sup>26</sup> A O add. — <sup>27</sup> A O add. — <sup>28</sup> A O add. — <sup>29</sup> A O add. — <sup>30</sup> A O add. — <sup>31</sup> A O add. — <sup>32</sup> A O add. — <sup>33</sup> A O add. — <sup>34</sup> A O add.

ער

1 R continues ועד מדינת שיוצא שם ביערו המור והחיים the rest till the end of the year and the life of the king; A O near after נהר גוון ועד מדי: נהר גוון (ניסבור בכל E) ועד מדינת שיוצא שם (שימצא משם O) — והרי (ועד O) הפתח (חפרון E) ועד מדינות טובות שימצאו שם (שימצא משם O) ובבואו A<sup>4</sup> —. מהלך ארבעה חודשים וארבע (וארבעה E) ימים A<sup>3</sup> —. שיוצא E<sup>2</sup> —, וכנאשם ובבואו האסרודור הגדול שינאר O; שם האינפירודור הגדול הזה סנינאר A continues; ואח A; והוא ראה R<sup>5</sup> —. ובואו שם האימפיר דורו הגדול הזה סנינאר E ועם and וערלים A omits; עם רב עמו מן העיר R<sup>6</sup> —. שמשפלים ארנו של ר' עד שהגירו O; ויגירו לו הענין כמות שהוא R<sup>7</sup> —. ושאל A O continue (עם E) רב עמו; זה הבין A<sup>8</sup> —. ואמר R O continue; והגירו לו כל אלו הרברים; לו הדרים R<sup>12</sup> —. והשימורו R<sup>11</sup> —. את ארנו R<sup>10</sup> —. כי R inserts<sup>9</sup> —. כן. קן. ויניא אל המדור מה ומה בשוה A<sup>14</sup> —. ויהיה של ען בתוך של R<sup>13</sup> —. ותשימו ארנו של דניאל בתוך ארנו של זוכית ותחלוהו מן העשר בשלשלות של ברל בתוך עד היום חלי R<sup>18</sup> —. ובין ארמאי O; ארמי A<sup>17</sup> —. R omits<sup>16</sup> —. תבנו נכסח R<sup>15</sup> —. בכל הנהר A inserts<sup>19</sup> —. ועד (ועד E) היום הזה ארנו של דניאל חלי A; ארנו לרובור A; (לרובור Neub.) לכינר R<sup>22</sup> —. של דניאל A adds<sup>21</sup> —. ושער מל A<sup>20</sup> —. R omits<sup>23</sup> —. MS. O fol. 60 ends here; fol. 61 begins on p. צד of Asher. — R omits<sup>25</sup> —. נהרל A inserts<sup>24</sup> —. והם RA insert<sup>24</sup> —. ראות R<sup>27</sup> —. רה R<sup>26</sup> —. יהררים A<sup>29</sup> —. כמו, omitting R<sup>28</sup> —. ואמר E; וראת R<sup>27</sup> —. כשישן A<sup>32</sup> —. גרלים RA<sup>31</sup> —. הם. אומות אשר אינן מאמינים בדת שימצא A<sup>30</sup> —. הגבונים RA<sup>35</sup> —. (ויושבן A inserts<sup>34</sup> —. ארבע. R omits<sup>33</sup> —. מפשיית E

ויורדים מן ההרים לשלול ולבזז<sup>1</sup>. ועולים להרים ואין אדם יכול להלחם  
עמם והיהודים שבארצם<sup>2</sup> ביניהם<sup>3</sup> תלמידי חכמים. והם תחת רשות  
ראש הגולה שבבבל: ומשם חמשה<sup>4</sup> ימים לעמאריה<sup>5</sup> ושם כמו |  
ע"כ"ה אלף<sup>6</sup> מישראל. והיא תחלת הקהלות הדרים בהרי חפטון<sup>7</sup> כי שם  
יותר ממאה<sup>8</sup> קהלות מישראל. והיא תחלת ארץ מדי<sup>9</sup> והם מן הגלות  
הראשון שהגלה שלמנאסר המלך<sup>10</sup>. והם מדברים בלשון תרגום וביניהם  
תלמידי חכמים. והם חונים ממדינת עמאריה<sup>11</sup> ועד מדינת גילן מהלך  
כ"ה יום. עד<sup>12</sup> מלכות פרס ורשות מלך פרס עליהם ולוקח מהם מס על ידי  
פקידו. והמס אשר הם פורעים<sup>13</sup> כאן נשמש בכ"י [בכל מלכות ישמעאל על  
כל אחד ואחד מן הזכרים מבן ט"ז שנה ומעלה פורעין] בכל שנה ושנה זהב<sup>14</sup>  
אמירי<sup>15</sup>. שהוא זהוב ושלש מראבטי<sup>16</sup>; ושם קם היום עשר שנים איש<sup>17</sup>  
ושמו דוד אל רואי מעיר עמאריה<sup>18</sup> ולמד לפני ראש הגולה חסדאי  
ולפני ראש הישיבה של<sup>19</sup> גאון יעקב במדינת בגדאד<sup>20</sup> והיה מהיר<sup>21</sup>  
בתורת ישראל בהלכה ובתלמוד ובכל חכמת בני ישמעאל ובספרי החיצונים  
ע"כ בספרי החרטומים והמכשפים. | ועלה בדעתו להרים יד במלך פרס ולקבץ  
היהודים היושבים בהרי חפטון<sup>22</sup> לצאת ולהלחם בכל הגוים וללכת ולתפוש<sup>23</sup>  
ירושלם. והיה נותן ליהודים סימני' באותות<sup>24</sup> שקר ואומ' כי הק' ב' ה' <sup>25</sup>  
שלחני לכבוש ירושלים ולהוציא אתכם<sup>26</sup> מתחת עול הגוים והאמינו בו<sup>27</sup>.  
וקראו אותו משיחנו: ושמע מלך פרס הדבר ושלח אליו לבא<sup>28</sup> לדבר  
עמו והוא<sup>29</sup> הלך אליו בלא פחד ובהתחברו אל המלך<sup>30</sup> אמ' לו אתה<sup>31</sup>

הם <sup>3</sup> R. — שבארץ <sup>2</sup> A. — לשלול שלל ולבזז בו RA; מן ההרים R omits, אלפים R <sup>6</sup>. — לעמריה E; לעמריה A; לעמריה R <sup>5</sup>. — R <sup>4</sup> ז. — ביניהם omitting והיא R, apparently corrupt, omits פרס R <sup>10</sup>. — (פרס E). — שלמנאסר מלך פרס R <sup>10</sup>. — ממאה אלף <sup>8</sup> R. — בהר and reads תחלת והם סננים למדינת עמאריה יום עד A reads <sup>12</sup>. — עמריה E; עמאריה A; עמריה R <sup>11</sup> omitting from the next till ועד here B omits. — שפורעין A <sup>13</sup>. — פורעין R <sup>14</sup>. — מדיבטי R G <sup>16</sup>. — אמיר R <sup>15</sup>. — ושנה R A omits. — זהוב R A <sup>14</sup>. — פורעין R <sup>18</sup>. — והיום עשר שנים קם שם איש אחד A <sup>17</sup>. — מוראבטי E; מוראבטי A; מורבטי של R, omitting הישיבה Neub. הישיב R G <sup>19</sup>. — עמריה E; עמאריה A; עמריה R <sup>20</sup>. — בגדאד BM <sup>20</sup>. — הישיבה עלי A. — היה גורל and continues like text; A reads גורל (the similar) to בהיות משה ובהלכה ובתלמוד ובכל חכמה חיצונית ובלשון ישמעאל ובחכמתם ובספרי A <sup>23</sup>. — ולצאת E; חפון E; חפון A <sup>22</sup>. — החרטומים והמכשפים ואומר A <sup>25</sup>. — בארהיות <sup>24</sup> A. — את ירושלים E here and presently; לחפוש E. — מקצת יהודים A <sup>27</sup>. — אדם R <sup>26</sup>. — כי ה' שלחו E reads; להם כי השם שמע מלך פרס R <sup>28</sup> begins otherwise = text; ושמע הדבר מלך פרס R <sup>29</sup> omits. — הוא R <sup>31</sup> inserts. — עמו A <sup>30</sup>. — האתה הוא מלך היהודים A reads.

המלך של יהודים. ענה ואמר לו<sup>1</sup> אני. בעם<sup>2</sup> המלך וצוה לתפוש אותו<sup>3</sup> ולשמו בבית הסהר מקום אשר אסירי המלך אסורים שם<sup>4</sup> עד יום מותם בעיר דברזתאן<sup>5</sup> אשר על שפת<sup>6</sup> נהר גוזן הנהר הגדול; ולקץ<sup>7</sup> שלשה ימים ישב המלך לדבר עם שריו<sup>8</sup> על דבר היהודים אשר הרימו יד בו<sup>9</sup>. והנה דוד<sup>10</sup> בא לפניהם<sup>11</sup> שהתיר עצמו מבית הסהר בלא רשות בן<sup>12</sup> אדם. ובעת שראהו<sup>13</sup> | המלך אמ' לו מי הביאך הנה<sup>14</sup> או מי התירך אמ' לו עט<sup>15</sup> חכמתי ותחבולתי<sup>16</sup> כי אני<sup>17</sup> ירא ממך ולא מכל עבדיך מיד צעק המלך לעבדיו<sup>18</sup> לאמר תפשוהו וענו<sup>19</sup> לו עבדיו<sup>20</sup> אין אנו רואין אדם<sup>21</sup> אלא בשמיעת האזן<sup>22</sup> מיד תמה המלך וכל שריו<sup>23</sup> על חכמתו. ואמר<sup>24</sup> למלך הנני הולך לדרכי והוא הלך והמלך<sup>25</sup> אחרי ושריו<sup>26</sup> ועבדיו הולכים אחרי מלכם<sup>27</sup> עד בואם אל שפת הנהר והוא לקח סודרו ופרש<sup>28</sup> על פני המים ועבר בו<sup>29</sup> באותו שעה. ראו אותו עבדי<sup>30</sup> המלך שהיה עובר במים על הסודר<sup>31</sup> ורלגו אחריו בדוגיות קטנות להשיבו ולא יכולו<sup>32</sup> ואמרו אין<sup>33</sup> מכשף בעולם כזה<sup>34</sup>. ובאותו היום הלך מהלך עשרה ימים<sup>35</sup> אל עיר עמאריה<sup>36</sup> בשם המפורש והגיד ליהודים כל אשר קרהו ותמהו כולם על חכמתו: ואחר כך שלח מלך פרס לאמיר אל מומנין<sup>37</sup> אשר בבגדאד ארון הישמעאלים<sup>38</sup> | לדבר על ראש ישיבת גולה<sup>39</sup> ועל ראש ישיבת נאון<sup>40</sup> יעקב למנוע לדוד אל רואי מעשות הדבר הזה ואם לאו<sup>41</sup> אהרוג את<sup>42</sup> היהודים הנמצאים בכל מלכותי וישבו כל קהלות ארץ פרס בצער גדול<sup>43</sup>

ולחשים R continues; לחשיו A<sup>3</sup>. — מיד נכנס A<sup>2</sup>. לו A omits; לו ואמר R<sup>1</sup>.  
 R omits. — A<sup>4</sup> continues; בבית הסהר omitting, אותו במקום  
 דברזתאן. Edd. רווסמאי; E דברזתאן; G = text; דבר ורתאן (Neub.).  
 — דוד אלוואי R<sup>10</sup>. — במלך A<sup>9</sup>. — ועבדיו A<sup>8</sup>. — ולקץ A<sup>7</sup>. —  
 — עד הנה R<sup>14</sup>. — שראה אותו A; ראוהו R<sup>13</sup>. — בני A; שום R<sup>12</sup>. —  
 A adds — ענו A<sup>19</sup>. — כי אני אני A<sup>16</sup>. — ותחבולתי A<sup>15</sup>. — פה A  
 RA omit — קול בלבו A<sup>21</sup>. — אורו A; אורו ולא שום אדם R<sup>20</sup>. — ואמרו לו  
 הולך והמלך A; הולך והמלך הלך R<sup>24</sup>. — ועתה ואמר A; ואמר הוא R<sup>23</sup>. — וכל שריו  
 In MS. — עליו A<sup>28</sup>. — ופרס R<sup>27</sup>. — הולכים עמו R<sup>26</sup>. — וכל שרי המלך A<sup>25</sup>. — הולך  
 — RA there is a stop after שעה but, if at all, its place is here. —  
 (not E) these words are fallen out. — E and Edd. קטנות ולא השיגורו. —  
 — עשרים יום E<sup>34</sup>. — כמו זה RA<sup>33</sup>. — כי אין RA<sup>32</sup>. —  
 ; מיד אל אלמומנין R, פרס After A<sup>35</sup>. — אלעמריה E; עד אל עמאריה A; עד אלעמריה R<sup>35</sup>  
 ארזי R inverts (not) — אל עמיר אלמומנין קליפה E; זה אל אמיר אלמומנין קליפה A  
 — the name of the town is spelt as usual in the resp. MSS. — היש' אשר בבנ'  
 ועם ראשי הישיבות and continues עם ראש הגולה A; על ראש הגולה R<sup>38</sup>. —  
 RA<sup>40</sup> — לא R<sup>39</sup>. — ולמנוע (למנוע) E את דוד אל רואי מעשות כדברים האלה  
 ובעת ההיא היתה צרה לכל הקהלות ארץ A<sup>41</sup>. — את (Neub.) omits R; כל RA insert  
 (שבארץ) פרס.



ושלחו<sup>1</sup> אליו ראש הגולה וראש ישיבת גאון יעקב לאמר דע<sup>2</sup> כי לא הגיע זמן הגאולה. כי אותותינו<sup>3</sup> לא ראינו כי לא<sup>4</sup> בכח יגבר אישי. ואנחנו גוזרים עליך<sup>5</sup> שתמנע עצמך מעשות כדבר הזה<sup>6</sup> ואם לאו<sup>7</sup> תהיה מנודה מכל ישראל. ושלחו<sup>8</sup> אל זכאי הנשיא אשר בארץ אשור ולר' יוסף ברהאן אל פלך<sup>9</sup> החווה אשר שם לשגר<sup>10</sup> הכתב אליו ועוד כתבו הם כתב אליו | להזהירו ולא קבל. עד שקם מלך אחד ושמו זין אל דין מלך תוגרמים עבר מלך פרס. ושלח בשביל<sup>11</sup> חמיו של דוד אל רואי ונתן לו שחד עשרת אלפים זהובים להרוג אותו בסתר ובא אל ביתו והרגו והוא ישן<sup>12</sup> על מטתו ונתבטלה עצתו<sup>13</sup>. ובא<sup>14</sup> מלך פרס על היהודים היושבים בהר. והם שלחו אל ראש הגולה לבא לעזרם אצל המלך ולפייסו<sup>15</sup> ונתפיים במאה ככר זהב שנתנו לו<sup>16</sup> ותשקוט הארץ אחרי כן: ומאותו ההר עד חמדן<sup>17</sup> מהלך עשרים יום<sup>18</sup> היא מדי העיר הגדולה ושם כמו שלשים אלף מיישראל<sup>19</sup>; ושם לפני כנסת אחת קבורים מרדכי ואסתר<sup>20</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Here the following, preserved in E A, has fallen out, by dittolepsy, in BM and R after ושלחו (E הקהלות): ושלחו ואל ראשי הישיבות (הקהלות E) למה נמות לעיניכם גם אנחנו גם כל הקהלות אשר במלכות שבגנדאר (אשר בגנדאר E) למען את האיש הזה ולא ישפוך דם נקי או כתבו וראש<sup>2</sup> A. — אל ראש הגולה ואל ראשי ישיבת גאון יעקב אל דוד אלוראי כתב לאמר: ושלחו R continues; ואנו אומרים לך A<sup>5</sup>. — ולא R<sup>4</sup>. — ערין ואותותינו A<sup>3</sup>. — הישיבות דע לך Neub. ושלחו ער R G<sup>8</sup>. — לא RE<sup>7</sup>. — עוד כדברים האלו A<sup>6</sup>. — כי תמנע A<sup>5</sup>. — ולרבי יוסף החווה המכונה בורהאן A<sup>9</sup>. — מיד שלחו לו כמו כן A; ושלחו לו ער ה' לשגר כתבים אל דוד אל רואי ועד כתבו הנשיא והחווה A continues<sup>10</sup>. — אלשך (אלמלך E) A<sup>12</sup>. — בעד E<sup>11</sup>. — הנזכרים כתבים אליו לורו ולהזהירו ולא קבל ולא שב מדרגו הורעה A adds<sup>13</sup>. — להרוג את דוד אל רואי בסתר וכן עשה בא אל ביתו והוא ישן והרגו ולא שב חמת מלך פרס מעל היהודים: This passage reads thus in A<sup>14</sup>. — ותחבולותיו אשר בהר ואשר בארצו וכשראו כן שלחו אל ראש הגולה לבוא בעזרתם אצל מלך פרס ויבוא בדברים טובים ודברי פיוס ופייסו ונתפיים ונתן לו כמאה ככרים זהב ותשקוט הארץ אחרי כן וחמתו — מרן R; חמרן BM<sup>17</sup>. — היהודים R adds<sup>16</sup>. — ולפייסם So R; BM<sup>15</sup>. — שככה חמשים A; 5 אלף יהודים R<sup>19</sup>. — עשרה ימים A; עד מדי and continues ימים R<sup>18</sup>. — ושם לפני העיר כנסת של מרדכי ואסתר R Neub.<sup>20</sup> — אלף מיישראל.

## TRANSLATION.

Thence it is a day and a half to Sura, which is Mata Mehasya, where the Heads of the Captivity and the Heads of the Academies dwelt at first<sup>1</sup>. Here is the sepulchre of R. Sherira, and of R. Hai his son of blessed memory, also of R. Saadiah Al-Fiumi, and of Rab Samuel the son of Hofni the Cohen, and of Zephaniah the son of Kushi, the son of Gedaliah the prophet, and of the Princes of the House of David, and of the Heads of the Academies who lived there before its demolition<sup>2</sup>.

Thence it is two days to Shafjathib. Here is a Synagogue which the Israelites built from the earth of Jerusalem and its stones, and they called it Shafjathib, which is by Nehardea<sup>3</sup>.

Thence it is a day and a half's journey to Al Janbar, which was Pumbedita in Nehardea<sup>4</sup>. About 3,000 Jews dwell there. The city lies on the river Euphrates. Here is the Synagogue of Rab and Samuel, and their house of study, and in front of it are their graves.

Thence it is five days to Hillah. From this place it is a journey of twenty-one days by way of the deserts to the land of Saba, which is p. 70 called the land | Al-Yemen, lying at the side of the land of Shinar which is towards the North<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The Talmud (Sabbath, 11 a) speaks of the destruction of Mata Mehasya, and Sura took its place as a centre of learning.

<sup>2</sup> See Berliner, pp. 45, 47, 54, and 57, for particulars derived from the Talmud and Midrash as to the several centres of Jewish learning in Babylonia.

<sup>3</sup> This synagogue is repeatedly mentioned in the Talmud. Zunz (Note 255) omits mentioning Aboda Zarah, 43 b, where Rashi explains that Shafjathib was a place in the district of Nehardea, and that Jeconiah and his followers brought the holy earth thither, giving effect to the words of the Psalmist: "For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof" (Ps. cii. 14).

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin visited the various seats of learning in the neighbourhood, and thus came again to Nehardea, which has been already mentioned on p. 53. Rab Jehuda not Rab is there associated with Samuel.

<sup>5</sup> Asher, at this stage of Benjamin's narrative, has the following note: "For the illustration of that portion of our text which treats of Arabia, we refer the reader to the Rev. S. L. Rapoport's paper, 'Independent Jews of Arabia,' which will be found at the end of these notes." No such account appeared in the work, but in the *Bikkurei Ha'ittim* for the year 1824, p. 51, there appears an interesting essay in Hebrew on the subject by Rapoport, to which the reader is referred. It is a matter of history that the powerful independent Jewish communities which were settled at

There dwell the Jews called Kheibar, the men of Teima. And Teima is their seat of government where R. Hanan the Nasi rules over them.

Yathrib, afterwards called Medina, and in the volcanic highlands of Kheibar and Teima called the Harrah, were crushed by Mohammed. Dr. Hirschfeld, in the *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, vol. XV, p. 170, gives us the translation of a letter found in the Cairo *Genizah*, addressed by Mohammed to the people of Kheibar and Maqna, granting them certain privileges from which the Jews, who were allowed to remain in their homes, benefited. Omar, the second Caliph, broke the compact, but allowed them to settle at Kufa on the Euphrates. Although pilgrims pass annually up and down the caravan tracks to Mecca, the information respecting the old Jewish sites in the Harrah is most meagre. Edrisi and Abu-l Fida throw no light on Benjamin's account. In the year 1904 an able work by Mr. D. G. Hogarth appeared under the title of *The Penetration of Arabia*, being a record of the development of Western knowledge concerning the Arabian Peninsula. He gives a full account of the European travellers who have described the country. Niebuhr, who visited Yemen in 1762, repeated the statement made by the Italian traveller Varthema that there were still wild Jews in Kheibar. The missionary Joseph Woolf visited Arabia in 1836, and he gives us an account of an interview he had with some of the Rechabites. No weight, however, can be attached to his fantastic stories. W. G. Palgrave, who resided for some years in Syria as a Jesuit, where he called himself Father Michael (Cohen), was entrusted in 1862 with a mission to Arabia by Napoleon III in connexion with the projected Suez Canal; he was one of the few visitors to the Harrah, but he makes no special reference to the Jews. Joseph Halevi made many valuable discoveries of inscriptions in South Arabia, which he traversed in 1869. He visited the oppressed Jewish community at Sanaa in Yemen; he further discovered traces of the ancient Minaean kingdom, and found that the Jews in the Nejran were treated with singular tolerance and even favour; but he was not able to tell us anything respecting the Jews of the Harrah.

C. M. Doughty was, however, more successful when visiting this district in 1875. Of Kheibar he says "that it is now a poor village whose inhabitants are a terrible kindred, Moslems outwardly, but, in secret, cruel Jews that will suffer no stranger to enter among them." See C. M. Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, vol. II, p. 129. "Teima is a Nejd colony of Shammar; their fathers came to settle there not above 200 years past. Old Teima of the Jews, according to their tradition, had been (twice) destroyed by flood. From those times there remain some great rude stone buildings. It is now a prosperous open place" (vol. I, p. 286).

The only writer that casts any doubt upon Benjamin's record about Arabia is the R. Jacob Safir who visited Yemen and some of the Arabian ports in the Red Sea in the year 1864. See chaps. xv and xliii of *Iben Safir*, Lyck, 1866. Dr. L. Grünhut, in his introduction, *Die*

It is a great city, and the extent of their land is sixteen days' journey. It is surrounded by mountains—the mountains of the north. The Jews own many large fortified cities. The yoke of the Gentiles is not upon them. They go forth to pillage and to capture booty from distant lands in conjunction with the Arabs, their neighbours and allies. These Arabs dwell in tents, and their home is in the way of the desert. They own no houses, and they go forth to pillage and to capture booty in the land of Shinar and Al-Yemen. All the neighbours of these Jews go in fear of them. Among them are husbandmen and owners of cattle; their land is extensive, and they have in their midst learned and wise men. They give the tithe of all they possess unto the scholars who sit in the house of learning, also to poor Israelites and to the recluses, who are the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and who do not eat meat nor taste wine, and sit clad in  
p. 71 garments | of black. They dwell in caves or underground houses, and fast each day with the exception of the Sabbaths and Festivals, and implore mercy of the Holy One, blessed be He, on account of the exile of Israel, praying that He may take pity upon them, and upon all the Jews, the men of Teima, for the sake of His great Name, also upon Tilmas the great city, in which there are about 100,000 Jews<sup>1</sup>. At this place lives Salmon the Nasi, the brother of Hanan the Nasi; and the land belongs to the two brothers, who are of the seed of David, for they have their pedigree in writing. They address many questions unto the Head of the Captivity—their kinsman in Bagdad—and they fast forty days in the year for the Jews that dwell in exile.

There are here about forty large towns and 200 hamlets and villages. The principal city is Tanae, and in all the districts together there are about 300,000 Jews. The city of Tanae is well fortified, and in the midst thereof the people sow and reap. It is fifteen miles in extent. Here is the palace of the Nasi called Salmon. And in Teima dwells Hanan the Nasi, his brother. It is a beautiful city,  
p. 72 and contains gardens | and plantations. And Tilmas is likewise a great city; it contains about 100,000 Jews. It is well fortified, and is situated between two high mountains. There are wise, discreet,

*Reisebeschreibungen des R. Benjamin von Tudela*, Jerusalem, 1903, p. 16, refutes Safr's statements.

In Hogarth's work, p. 282, is shown a print of the Teima stone, with its Aramaic inscription, considered to belong to the fourth or fifth century B. C., and on p. 285 there is Doughty's interesting sketch of Kheibar.

<sup>1</sup> It is clear that, when speaking of the population of some of these places, the whole oasis or district is intended, and not a particular town.

and rich men amongst the inhabitants. From Tilmas to Kheibar it is three days' journey. People say they belong to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, whom Shalmaneser king of Assyria, led hither into captivity. They have built strongly-fortified cities, and make war with all other kingdoms. No man can readily reach their territory, because it is a march of eighteen days' journey through the desert, which is altogether uninhabited, so that no one can enter the land.

Kheibar is a very large city with 50,000 Jews<sup>1</sup>. In it are

<sup>1</sup> In reading through the foregoing account of the Jews in Arabia, it is quite clear that Benjamin never visited the country, nor did he pretend to have done so. In the words of Mr. C. R. Beazley (*The Dawn of Modern Geography*, p. 252), "It is no longer, for the most part, a record of personal travel; it is rather an attempt to supplement the first part 'of things seen,' by a second 'of things heard.'" But Beazley is wrong when he characterizes as "wild" the account of the Jews of Southern Arabia "who were Rechabites." Does Benjamin say so? There is no such reading in the MS. of the British Museum. The student, it is thought, will by this time have come to the conclusion that it is the oldest and most trustworthy of our available authorities. The whole misconception has arisen from the fact that the unreliable MS. E and all the printed editions have transposed the letters of כרר and made רכר of it. Rapoport, in the article already referred to, seems to suspect the faulty reading: to justify it, he connects the men of Kheibar with the Rechabites and the sons of Heber the Kenite, basing his argument upon Jer. xxxv, Judges i. 16, 1 Sam. xxvii. 10, and 1 Chron. ii. 55.

Neither Zunz nor Asher makes any comments upon this chapter of the itinerary. Graetz gives an abstract of Benjamin's account; he, as well as all other writers, is unable to identify Tilmas, but is of opinion that Tanae must be Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, which, however, is twenty-five days' journey beyond Kheibar. It is well known that Yemen has, since Bible times, harboured a Jewish population, who—notwithstanding all oppression, intensified under Turkish rule—inhabit many of its towns and villages to the present day. It is comparatively accessible, owing to its proximity to the sea. We must cherish the hope that Great Britain, now that it claims the Hinterland of Aden, will extend its protection to the Jews.

The volcanic highlands (Harrah) of Kheibar were always inaccessible, owing to their being surrounded by waterless deserts and fanatic Bedouin tribes.

R. Abraham Farissol, who flourished at the beginning of the sixteenth century, writes that there was a large number of Jews in the district, who lived in tents and in wooden houses or huts. His contemporary, David Reubeni, who crossed from Arabia to Abyssinia and came to Europe in 1524, pretended to be brother of Joseph, king of the tribes

learned men, and great warriors, who wage war with the men of Shinar and of the land of the north, as well as with the bordering of Reuben, Gad, and half-Manasseh in the desert of Chabor (Kheibar). Benjamin takes care to qualify his statement as to the origin of the Jews of Kheibar by adding—יֹאמְרוּ בְּנֵי אֲדָם—"people say they belong to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, whom Salmanesser, King of Assyria, led hither into captivity."

I would here mention an interesting work of Dr. R. Dozy, Professor of History and Oriental Languages at Leyden, *Die Israeliten in Mecca*, 1864. By a series of ingenious inferences from Bible texts (1 Sam. xxx, 1 Chron. iv. 24-43, &c.) he essays to establish that the tribe of Simeon, after David had dispersed the Amalekites who had already been weakened by Saul, entered Arabia and settled all along in the land of the Minaeans and at Mecca, where they established the worship at the Kaaba and introduced practices which have not been altogether abandoned up to the present day. Dr. Dozy further contends that after Hezekiah's reign numerous Jewish exiles came to Arabia.

Hommel, in two articles in Ersch and Gruber's *Encyclopaedia*, under "Bedouins" and "Anzah," gives full particulars respecting the Anizeh, otherwise Anaessi, tribe—that they were in the habit of joining the Wahabees and other Bedouin tribes in attacking caravans and levying blackmail. The Turkish Pasha at Damascus had to pay annually passage-money to ensure the safety of the pilgrims to Mecca. On one occasion two of their sheiks were decoyed by the Turks and killed; but the Anizeh, aided by other tribes to the number of 80,000, took ample revenge by pillaging the Mecca caravan on its return. They seized a quantity of pearls and the women were said to have attempted boiling them with the rice. Seetzen (*Journey through Syria, &c.*, I, ch. i. p. 356) says, "In Kheibar are no Jews now, only Anaessi." Layard and other modern writers often refer to the Anizeh Bedouins. Travellers go in dread of them in the Syrian desert and all along the Euphrates. Doughty mentions that they, more than any other tribe, resemble the Jews both in appearance and disposition.

Ritter (*Geographie*, vol. XII), in quoting Niebuhr, makes mention of the widespread Anizeh tribe of Bedouins who were anciently known to be Jews. He further states that the Jews of Damascus and Aleppo shun them as they are non-observant Jews, considered by some to be Karaites. Does all this give ground for any presumption that they are or were crypto-Jews, the descendants of the former Kheibar Jews, possibly also of those whom Omar allowed to settle at Kufa?

This lengthy note may fitly be closed with the following mysterious remark in Doughty's usual quaint style (vol. I, p. 127) in connexion with the murder of a Bagdad Jew who tried to reach Kheibar: "But let none any more jeopardy his life for Kheibar! I would that these leaves might save the blood of some: and God give me this reward of my labour! for who will, he may read in them all the tale of Kheibar."

tribes of the land of Al Yemen near them, which latter country is on the confines of India<sup>1</sup>. Returning from their land it is a journey of twenty-five days to the river Virae, which is in the land of Al Yemen, where about 3,000 Jews dwell<sup>2</sup>, | and amongst them are many a Rabbi p. 73 and Dayan.

Thence it takes five days to Basrah (Bassorah) which lies on the river Tigris. Here there are 10,000 Jews, and among them are scholars, and many rich men. Thence it is two days to the river Samara, which is the commencement of the land of Persia. 1,500 Jews live near the sepulchre of Ezra, the priest, who went forth from Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes and died here. In front of his grave is a large synagogue. And at the side thereof the Mohammedans erected a house of prayer out of their great love and veneration for him, and they like the Jews on that account. And the Mohammedans come hither to pray<sup>3</sup>. Thence it is four days to Khuzistan, which is

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen further on (p. 95) that Benjamin speaks of Aden as being in India, "which is on the mainland." It is well known that Abyssinia and Arabia were in the Middle Ages spoken of as "Middle India." It has been ascertained that in ancient times the Arabs extensively colonized the western sea-coast of the East Indies. Cf. the article "Arabia," in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and Supplement.

<sup>2</sup> The Casanatense MS. here interpolates: "Thence it takes seven days to Lusia, where there are 2,000 Israelites." Asher substitutes for Lusia Waset, a place near the Tigris. There must be some misunderstanding here, as it takes more than seven days to reach the Tigris from Yemen by land.

<sup>3</sup> See Dr. Hartwig Hirschfeld's account of a Fragment of a Work by Judah Al-harizi, being a description of a pilgrimage through Mesopotamia with a view to visit Ezra's grave. The Arab geographer Yakut locates the grave in the village Maisan on the river Samara near the place where the Euphrates and Tigris unite (*J. Q. R.*, vol. XV, 683). Layard writes as follows:—"We stopped at the so-called tomb of the prophet Ezra, about twenty-five miles from the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, at Korna. The building, which is of a comparatively modern date, consisted of two chambers, an outer one which was empty, and an inner one containing the tomb built of bricks, covered with white stucco and enclosed in a wooden case, over which was thrown a large blue cloth fringed with yellow tassels with the name of the donor embroidered on it in Hebrew characters. No trace of either the large synagogue or of the mosque mentioned by Benjamin now exists, and it may be doubted whether the present building covers the tomb which was seen by the Hebrew traveller. We could find no ancient remains near it, as the Tigris is constantly changing its course, and was still eating away the bank of alluvial soil, upon the edge of which the building stood. It is highly

Elam. This province is not inhabited in its entirety, for part of it lies waste. In the midst of its ruins is Shushan (Susa), the capital, the site of the palace of King Ahasuerus. Here are the remains of a large structure of great antiquity. The city contains about 7,000 Jews and fourteen synagogues. |

p. 74 In front of one of the synagogues is the sepulchre of Daniel of blessed memory. The river Tigris divides the city, and the bridge connects the two parts. On the one side where the Jews dwell is the sepulchre of Daniel. Here the market-places used to be, containing great stores of merchandise, by which the Jews became enriched. On the other side of the bridge they were poor, because they had no market-places nor merchants there, only gardens and plantations. And they became jealous, and said "All this prosperity enjoyed by those on the other side is due to the merits of Daniel the prophet who lies buried there." Then the poor people asked those who dwelt on the other side to place the sepulchre of Daniel in their midst, but the others would not comply. So war prevailed between them for many days, and no one went forth or came in on account of the great strife between them. At length both parties growing tired of this state of things took a wise view of the matter, and made a compact, namely, that the coffin of Daniel should be taken for one year to the one side and for another year to the other side. This they did, and both sides became rich. In the course of time Sinjar Shah-ben-Shah, who ruled over the kingdom of Persia and had forty-five kings subject to his authority, came to this place. |

p. 75 He is called Sultan-al-Fars-al-Khabir in Arabic (the mighty Sovereign of Persia), and it is he who ruled from the river Samara unto the city of Samarkand, and unto the river Gozan and the cities of Media and the mountains of Chafton<sup>1</sup>. He ruled also over Tibet, in the forests whereof one finds the animals from which musk is obtained<sup>2</sup>. The extent of his Empire is a journey of four months. When this great Emperor Sinjar, king of Persia, saw that they took the coffin of probable that the tomb seen by Benjamin of Tudela had long before been carried away by the river." Layard's *Early Adventures in Persia, Susiana, and Babylonia*, vol. II, p. 214. See also an elaborate note of Dr. Benisch, p. 91 of his edition of Pethachia's *Travels*, and I. J. Benjamin II, *Eight Years in Asia and Africa*, p. 167.

<sup>1</sup> As for the river Gozan see p. 51, note 3. The mountains of Chafton, referred to also in pp. 77, 78, would seem to include not only the Zagros range but also the highlands of Kurdistan.

<sup>2</sup> *Marco Polo*, book II, chap. xlv, says of Tibet: "In this country there are many of the animals that produce musk. The Tartars have great numbers of large and fine dogs which are of great service in catching the musk-beasts, and so they procure a great abundance of musk."



Daniel from one side of the river to the other, and that a great multitude of Jews, Mohammedans and Gentiles, and many people from the country were crossing the bridge, he asked the meaning of this proceeding, and they told him these things. He said "It is not meet to do this ignominy unto Daniel the prophet, but I command you to measure the bridge from both sides, and to take the coffin of Daniel and place it inside another coffin of crystal, so that the wooden coffin be within that of crystal, and to suspend this from the middle of the bridge by a chain of iron; at this spot you must build a synagogue for all comers, so that whoever wishes to pray there, be he Jew or Gentile, may do so." And to this very day the coffin is suspended from the bridge. | And the king commanded p. 76 that out of respect for Daniel no fisherman should catch fish within a mile above or a mile below<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The reputed sepulchre of Daniel is situated between Schuster and Dizful in Persia, close by the river Shaour, an affluent of the Karun river, which is supposed to be the Ulai of the Bible, Dan. viii. 2. It is within sight of the vast mound which denotes the site of Susa, the ancient Shushan. Here Mme. Dieulafoy in 1881 made extensive excavations of the palace of the Persian kings, many relics of which are now on view at the Louvre in Paris.

The tomb of Daniel has been fully described by Layard—see *Early Adventures*, vol. II, p. 295. It is of comparatively recent date, not unlike the shrines of Mussulman saints, and is surmounted by a high conical dome of irregular brickwork, somewhat resembling in shape a pine cone. The reader is referred to the beautiful pictorial illustrations of Daniel's reputed tomb, of the ruins of Susa, and of Schuster and its bridges in Mme. Dieulafoy's *La Perse, la Chaldée et la Susiane*, Paris, 1887.

There is nothing to connect the building on the banks of the Shaour with the tomb of Daniel save the Mussulman tradition. There are many legends connected with the reputed sepulchre, one of which is to the effect that the men of Susa diverted the river in order to bury Daniel's coffin in its bed.

Mr. E. N. Adler, in his recent work *Jews in many Lands*, Jewish Publication Society of America, p. 224, in describing Samarkand, writes as follows: "Tradition has it that Tamerlane had seen the tomb at Susa in Persia, with a warning inscribed thereon, that none should open its door; and so he broke it open from behind, and found it written that Nebi Daniel was there buried. The impetuous conqueror had the sarcophagus removed with all reverence, and carried it with him to his own capital to be its palladium. The sarcophagus is over twenty yards long as befits a prophet's stature. It has been recently covered by a brick chapel with three cupolas, but photographs of the ancient structure can be had in Samarkand. It is grandly placed at the edge of a cliff overhanging the rapid river Seop. The local Jews do not believe

Thence it takes three days to Rudbar where there are about 20,000 Israelites, and among them are learned and rich men. But the Jews live there under great oppression. Thence it is two days to the river Vant, where there are 4,000 Israelites. Thence it is four days to the land of Mulehet. Here lives a people who do not profess the Mohammedan religion, but live on high mountains, and worship the Old Man of the land of the Hashishim<sup>1</sup>. And among them there are four communities of Israel who go forth with them in making war. They are not under the rule of the king of Persia, but reside in the high mountains, and descend from these mountains to pillage and to capture booty, and then return to the mountains, and none can overcome them. There are learned men amongst the Jews of their land. These Jews are under the authority of the Head of the

P. 77 Captivity in Babylon. Thence it is five days to Amadia | where there are about 25,000 Israelites<sup>2</sup>. This is the first of those communities that dwell in the mountains of Chafton, where there are more than 100 Jewish communities. Here is the commencement of the land of Media. The Jews belong to the first exile which King Shalmanezar led away; and they speak the language in which the Targum is written. Amongst them are learned men. The communities reach from the province of Amadia unto the province of Gilan, twenty-five days distant on the border of the kingdom of Persia. They are under the authority of the king of Persia, and he raises a tribute from them through the hands of his officer, and the tribute which they pay every year by way of poll-tax is one gold amir which is equivalent to one and one-third maravedi. This tax has to be paid by all males in the land of Islam who are over the age of fifteen. At this place (Amadia), there arose this day ten years ago, a man named David Alroy of the city of Amadia<sup>3</sup>. He studied under Chasdai

the story, nor do they quite disbelieve it, for I went with two who prayed there at the grave of the righteous."

<sup>1</sup> The reader will recollect that reference to this sect has already been made on page 27.

<sup>2</sup> Amadia is an important city in Kurdistan in the villayet of Bagdad, north of Mosul. Ben Virga and R. Joseph Hacoen, the author of *Emek Habacha*, state that 1,000 Jewish families lived in the city at that time. It is strange that in all the MSS., including Asher's text, this city is called Amaria instead of Amadia. The mistake doubtless arose from the fact that the copyists mistook the ך for a ך. The scribe of the British Museum MS. had made other errors of this kind, writing בגדאד for בגדאד, חרמור for חרמור, &c.

<sup>3</sup> The author of *Emek Habacha* gives the date of the Alroy tragedy as 1163. It should, however, be antedated by a few years. Benjamin must

the Head of the Captivity, and under the Head of the Academy Gaon Jacob, in the city of Bagdad, and he was well versed in the Law of Israel, in the Halachah, as well as in the Talmud, and in all the wisdom of the Mohammedans; also in secular literature and in the writings of magicians and soothsayers. | He conceived the idea of p. 78 rebelling against the king of Persia, and of collecting the Jews who live in the mountains of Chafton to go forth and to fight against all the nations, and to march and capture Jerusalem. He showed signs by pretended miracles to the Jews, and said "The Holy One, Blessed be He, sent me to capture Jerusalem and to free you from the yoke of the Gentiles." And the Jews believed in him and called him their Messiah. When the king of Persia heard of it he sent for him to come and speak with him. Alroy went to him without fear, and when he had audience of the king, the latter asked him "Art thou the king of the Jews." He said, "I am." Then the king was very angry, and commanded that he should be seized and placed in the prison of the king, the place where the king's prisoners were bound unto the day of their death, in the city of Dabaristan which is on the large river Gozan. At the end of three days whilst the king was sitting deliberating with his princes concerning the Jews who had rebelled, David suddenly stood before them. He had escaped from the prison without the knowledge of any man. | And when the king p. 79 saw him, he said to him "Who brought you hither, and who has released you?" "My own wisdom and skill," answered the other; "for I am not afraid of you, nor of any of your servants." The king forthwith loudly bade his servants to seize him, but they answered "We cannot see any man, although our ears hear him." Then the king and all his princes marvelled at his subtlety; but he said to the king "I will go my way"; so he went forth. And the king went after him; and the princes and servants followed their king until they came to the river-side. Then Alroy took off his mantle and spread it on the face of the water to cross thereon. When the servants of the king saw that he crossed the water on his mantle they pursued him in small boats, wishing to bring him back, but they were unable, and they said "There is no wizard like this in the whole world." That self-same day he went a journey of ten days to the city of Amadia by the strength of the ineffable name, and he told the Jews all that had befallen him, and they were astonished at his wisdom.

have passed through Egypt on his return journey some time before Sept., 1171. See note 2, p. 1. He here tells us that the Alroy catastrophe took place just ten years before his visit to Bagdad and the neighbourhood. It is clear therefore that 1160 is the latest date when this event could have taken place.

- p. 80 After that the king of Persia sent word to the Emir Al-Mumenin, the Caliph of the Mohammedans, at Bagdad | urging him to warn the Head of the Exile, and the Head of the Academy Gaon Jacob, to restrain David Alroy from executing his designs. And he threatened that he would otherwise slay all the Jews in his Empire. Then all the congregations of the land of Persia were in great trouble. And the Head of the Captivity, and the Head of the Academy Gaon Jacob, sent to Alroy, saying, "The time of redemption is not yet arrived; we have not yet seen the signs thereof, for by strength shall no man prevail. Now our mandate is, that thou cease from these designs, or thou shalt surely be excommunicated from all Israel." And they sent unto Sakai the Nasi in the land of Ashur (Mosul) and unto R. Joseph Burhan-al-falak the astronomer there, bidding them to send on the letter to Alroy, and furthermore they themselves wrote to him to warn him, | but he would not accept the warning. Then there arose
- p. 81 a king of the name of Sin-el-din, the king of the Togarmim, and a vassal of the king of Persia, who sent to the father-in-law of David Alroy, and gave him a bribe of 10,000 gold pieces to slay him in secret<sup>1</sup>. So he went to the house of Alroy, and slew him whilst he was asleep on his bed. Thus his plans were frustrated. Then the king of Persia went forth against the Jews that lived in the mountain; and they sent to the Head of the Captivity to come to their assistance and to appease the king. He was eventually appeased by a gift of 100 talents of gold, which they gave him, and the land was at peace thereafter<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This Turkoman may have been the Prince of Arbela who in 1167 joined Saladin in his successful invasion of Egypt. He was remarkable for his great strength and courage (see Bohadin's *Life of Saladin*, Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, p. 51).

<sup>2</sup> The accounts given by Ben Virga in *Shevet Jehudah*, and by Joseph Hacoheh in *Emek Habacha*, are evidently based upon Benjamin's record, and throw no fresh light on this Messianic movement. Asher, vol. II, note 300, promises but fails to give the contents of an Arabic document written by a contemporary, the renegade Samuel Ibn Abbas, which the savant S. Munk had discovered in the Paris library; a German translation of this document appears in Dr. Wiener's *Emek Habacha*, 1858, p. 169. The name of the pseudo-Messiah is given as Menahem, surnamed Al-Ruhi, but Munk satisfactorily proves that he is identical with our David Alroy. Being a young man of engaging appearance and great accomplishments, he gained considerable influence with the governor of Amadia, and had a considerable following among the Jews of Persia. With the intention of occupying the castle, he introduced a number of his armed adherents into the town, who were careful, however, to conceal their weapons. The governor detected the conspiracy, and put Alroy to death. The

From this mountain it is a journey of twenty days to Hamadan, which is the great city of Media, where there are 30,000 Israelites. In front of a certain synagogue, there are buried Mordecai and Esther<sup>1</sup>. |

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excitement among the Jews lasted for a considerable time. Two impostors, with letters purporting to emanate from Alroy, came to Bagdad, and worked upon the credulity of the community. Men and women parted with their money and jewellery, having been brought to believe that on a certain night they would be able to fly on angels' wings from the roofs of their houses to Jerusalem. The only thing which made the women feel unhappy was the fear that their little ones might not be able to keep pace with them in the aerial flight. At daybreak the fraud was discovered, but the impostors had meanwhile decamped with their treasure.

The chronicler adds that the year in which this occurred was called The Year of Flight.

De Sacy, in his *Chrestomathie Arabe*, I, p. 363, gives a similar story, the authorship of which he ascribes to Schahristani.

<sup>1</sup> Asher, vol. II, p. 167, n. 304, gives expression to a keen desire for further particulars as to this tomb. Dr. J. E. Polak, formerly Physician to the late Shah of Persia, gives the desired information, p. 26, in an interesting work on Persia. He writes as follows: "The only national monument which the Jews in Persia possess is the tomb of Esther at Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, whither they have made pilgrimages from time immemorial. In the centre of the Jewish quarter there is to be seen a low building with a cupola, on the top of which a stork has built its nest. The entrance is walled up for the greater part; there only remains below a small aperture which can be closed by a movable flat stone serving the purpose of a door and affording some protection from attacks, which are not uncommon. In the entrance hall, which has but a low ceiling, are recorded the names of pilgrims; also the year when the building was restored. Thence one gains access into a small four-cornered chamber in which there are two high sarcophagi made of oak, which are the monuments of Esther and Mordecai. On both of them are inscribed in Hebrew the words of the last chapter of the Book of Esther, as well as the names of three Physicians at whose expense the tomb was repaired."

Lord Rolandshay gives the most recent account of the tomb. An illustration of this traditional tomb will be found in the article "Esther" in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

The Casanatense MS. interpolates here a passage, which Asher renders: "Four days from thence stands Dabaristan on the river Kizil Ozein; it contains about 4,000 Jewish inhabitants." See p. 78. Taberistan is a district north of Teheran, south of the Caspian Sea.

(To be continued.)